

Minutes of the meeting of Watton Town Council held on
Tuesday 26th May 2026 at 7.00pm in Wayland Hall

Councillors Present: - Sarah Humphries (Chairman of the meeting), Cathy Halfacre, Stan Hebborn, Sue Hebborn, Tomos Hutchings, Keith Prince, Graham Martin, Don Saunders, Gillian Tarrant, Jacqueline White

Officer present: Jane Scarrott Clerk

I. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED from

Gavin Bulmer, Tina Cruz, Keith Gilbert, Jack White

Apologies also received from District Councillors Claire Bowes and Tina Kiddell.

2. NO DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE

3. MINUTES

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on May 12th 2026 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3.2 Updates from items raised at the meeting on May 12th 2026 not agenda items for this meeting:

- Saham Toney Parish Council has been invoiced for an agreed 50% contribution towards the costs of the Watton and Saham Flood Action Group (WASFAG) website 26/27.
- Three Councillors and members of staff are hoping to visit the Wayland Academy Garden Project on June 3rd.
- The Internal Auditor will be visiting the Town Council Office on 08/06/26 to undertake the end of year audit.
- New member of staff joined the Office Team on 18/05/26 as Receptionist/Office Support Clerk.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Chairman's Report

- The Chairman attended the successful Spring Fayre on 24.05.26 and the Fun Day at the Community Hub on 26.05.26. Thanks were voice to the Events & Marketing Officer and the Community Projects Officer for the hard work they put into the two events. Cllr Saunders was also thanked for his help.
- £173 was raised via raffle at the Spring Fayre for the Mayors Charities, one of which is Beside Youth.
- The Chairman made those present aware of the communication received from District Councillor Claire Bowes relating to asylum seekers and thanked those who have responded to recent concerns.
- Watton Loch Neaton Bowls Club has invited Town Councillors to visit the club and has challenged the Council to a match!
- New staff welcomed and retiring staff wished "all the best".

4.2 Vice-Chairman's Report

The Vice-Chairman re-iterated the positive comments about the Spring Fayre.

4.3 District Councillor's Report – Cllr Bowes and Cllr Kiddell both sent apologies for the meeting.

Cllr Bowes submitted a written report prior to the meeting and Cllr Kiddell informed the Office that there is little to report from Breckland Council at present other than the Breckland Council Annual Meeting was held on 21/05/26.

4.4 County Councillors Report – County Councillor Jack White sent apologies for the meeting. A written report was presented prior to the meeting.

Councillors requested that the three district councillors and the county councillor provide a written report at least 24 hours before the end of the month Town Council meeting.

4.5 Clerks Report as presented in the agenda pack with verbal update given:

- Annual Tree Survey being undertaken 11/06/26.
- Next HR Committee and Finance Committee meetings to be held on 05/06/26.

4.6 No further Reports from Councillors

5. WORKS IN PROGRESS

The Works in Progress List was received.

Noted that the proposed trod from the east of the Lidl site to the bus shelter has been constructed so the item will be removed from the Works in Progress list.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - no members of the public present.

7. FINANCE

7.1 Payments for May 2026 were approved for payment as on the list presented prior to the meeting with the addition of staff expenses of £252.73, £47.25, £45.54, Mayors photograph £55 and waste collection for the Spring Fayre £126.21.

Queries raised by Councillor Sue Hebborn:

- Credit from PHS has been used against invoices.
- Water charges at the Unit and Wayland Hall look to be of similar cost and this will be monitored but standing charges account for much of the bills.
- A large credit still exists for water for the toilets.
- Mileage allowance has increased from April 1st from 45p per mile to 55p per mile.
- Policy for purchase of items by staff should be reviewed.

8. UPDATE ON DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION (LGR) - See information on <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/LGR>

9. WATTON JUNIOR SCHOOL GRANT APPLICATION

It was resolved not to give a grant to Watton Junior School at this time.

10. ADDITIONAL PLANTERS

It was resolved to temporarily add the two planters outside Watton Library to the gardening contract for 26/27 at a cost of £250 per planter.

11. BANK SIGNATORIES

It was resolved that Sarah Humpries will replace Tina Kiddell as a Town Council bank signatory.

12. IT POLICY

It was resolved to accept the IT Policy as presented and with suggested additions as within the agenda pack for the meeting.

13. CAR PARKS

The transfer of the current Breckland Council owned car parks in the town is being reviewed by the solicitor acting for the Town Council. The Town Council has been asked if searches or a no search indemnity policy are wanted but to date no cost of an indemnity policy has been provided.

14. EVENTS

No Councillors have volunteered to act as Lead Councillors for either the Spring Fayre or Bike Event. It is becoming difficult to man events with volunteers and it was suggested investigation should be undertaken regarding using paid help. This will be an agenda item again for a future meeting and the Events and Marketing Officer will be asked what help she needs.

15. WORKING GROUPS

It was resolved that, as task and finish groups, the Loch Neaton Working Group and the Sports Centre Working Group will be called upon if needed and membership will be confirmed at that time.

16. DOG WASTE BINS

Councillors were asked to consider installing dog waste bins at Heritage Park and it was agreed a report will be compiled suggesting future strategy for the provision of litter and dog waste bins in the parish. This matter will be an agenda item for the Full Council meeting on June 23rd 2026.

17. PLANNING

17.1 PL/2026/0648/VARMAJ Variation of conditions 3, 4 & 5 on pp 3PL/2016/0701/VAR REDHILL PARK Redhill Lane, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 6RE

Support recommended

17.2 PL/2026/0638/DCA Discharge of Conditions 9, 10, 12 and 13 on PP PL/2025/1874/FMIN Cranswick Country Foods, ABATTOIR Brandon Road, Watton, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 6LW

Support recommended

18. Resolution passed to exclude the public and press to consider confidential matters.

It was agreed the weekly Wednesday Market will be held in the car park at the Queens Hall for the foreseeable future.